

In the claims:

Please cancel Claims 2, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13 and 15 and amend Claims 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12 and 14.

Claim 1(twice amended): A protective shield for preventing the transfer of disease and viruses to the palm and digits of the working hand of an individual, comprising:

a plurality of sleeves ~~whose~~ having first ends that are open and ~~whose second closed distal ends are closed;~~

a palmar shield of finite extent having first and second surfaces and first and second terminal edges[;], with said plurality of sleeves attached to said first terminal edges ~~permanently attached to said plurality of sleeves; and ,~~

finger insertion enabling means mounted in said first ends of said sleeves,[;]
~~retaining means cooperating between the host and the protective shield for maintaining said protective shield within the insertable reach of the hand of a user.~~

Claim 2(canceled). The protective shield of claim 1, wherein said retaining means comprises hook and loop fasteners attached to an object on the user and the second edge of the palmar shield.

Claim 3(amended): The protective shield of claim 1, wherein said finger insertion enabling means is a plurality of rings, with a single ring mounted in said first end of each

of the plurality of sleeves. ~~mounted one each in said first end of each of the plurality of sleeves.~~

Claim 4(canceled): The protective shield of claim 1, wherein said retaining means comprises hook and loop fasteners for attaching said protective shield to an article of clothing of the user and to the apron of the protective shield.

Claim 5(canceled)[.]: The protective shield of claim 1, wherein said retaining means is a portable container.

Claim 6(twice amended): A protective shield for preventing the transfer of disease and viruses to the palm and digits of the working hand of an individual, comprising:

a plurality of sleeves [whose] with first ends [are] held open [as] by rings mounted in said first ends of said sleeves, ~~and whose second~~ closed distal ends ~~are~~ closed;

a [A] palmar shield of finite extent having first and second surfaces and first and second edges;

means cooperating with said sleeves and said palmar shield for counteracting the transfer of active viruses or other infectious agents from a public surface to the palm and fingers of a hand; and,

retaining means cooperating between said individual ~~the host~~ and the protective shield for maintaining said protective shield within the insertable reach of the hand of the individual of a user.

Claim 7(twice amended): The protective shield of claim 6, wherein said means cooperating with said sleeves and said palmar shield for counteracting the transfer of active viruses or other infectious agents from a public surface to the palm and fingers of a hand comprises disinfectants[,] or [or] fungicides in cooperation with a binding agent that allows one to coat the active surfaces of the protective shield.

Claim 8(amended): The protective shield of claim 6, wherein said means cooperating with said sleeves and said palmar shield for counteracting the transfer of active viruses or other infectious agents from a public surface to the palm and fingers of a hand comprises disinfectants[,] or fungicides in cooperation with a binding agent immersed in the material of the palmar shield and sleeves.

Claim 9(amended): An apparatus for preventing the transfer of disease and viruses to the hands of an individual comprising:

a sheath having an interior surface with an absorber disposed thereupon with said absorber ~~mounted in the interior of said sheath with said absorber~~ being substantially impregnated with a contact transferable decontaminator;

a palm and finger protector having an apron contiguous with a multiplicity of sleeves connected to said apron which is inserted and withdrawn with rubbing contact with said absorber to facilitate the transfer of said decontaminator ~~the decontaminants~~ to ~~the working surfaces~~ an outer surfaces of the palm and finger protector; [.]

attaching means connected to the apron and to the sheath for ~~securing and securing~~ said palm and finger protector in the sheath and for connecting the sheath to an element on the body for securing said apparatus during non-use.

Claim 10(canceled): [.] The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the decontaminant is a liquid.

Claim 11(canceled): The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the decontaminator is a powder.

Claim 12(amended): [.] The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said attaching means ~~consists~~ comprises [of] hook and loop fasteners.

Claim 13(canceled). The protective shield of claim 1, wherein the number of sleeves equal the number of fingers.

Claim 14 (amended): The protective shield of claim 1, wherein a plurality of sleeves is replaced by a single sleeve.

Claim 15(canceled): The protective shield of claim 5, wherein the protective shields have a limited lifetime.

IN THE DRAWINGS

The numeral 36 included on the FIG. 5 that was filed 7/23/04 in the drawings was discussed in text added to the marked up specification and included in the clean version of the specification included herein.